

March 1984

TAIG

TWIN CITIES ATARI INTEREST GROUP

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President: Phil Seifert (448-7042)
Secretary: Rick Christian

Vice President: Dale Panton
Treasurer: Jim Dahlberg

TWIN CITIES ATARI INTEREST GROUP
6824 QUEEN AVENUE SOUTH
RICHFIELD, MN 55423

Next TAIG Meeting
Sunday March 25, 1984
Intereset Groups - 6:00 p.m.
TAIG - 7:00 p.m.

St. Louis Park Rec. Center
5005 West 36th Street
St. Louis Park

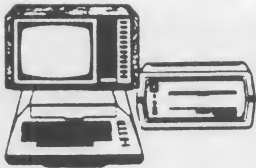
First for the fun news. The 850 interfaces are available once again for only \$180.00 (\$219 retail). Now for something even better; We are dropping diskette prices in March to only \$16.00/10 for generic and \$16.20/10 for Wabash. Finally, BASIC XL and ACTION are special priced at \$68 (or \$62 for group orders).

Most of the following items are now being clearanced at 40-80% off of suggested retail. That means that the prices are good only as long as we have them in stock, so don't wait too long to order. All APX programs left are priced from \$3.00 (Counter, 747 lander, Avalanche, Family Budget) to \$7.00 (Gallahad, Eastern Front, Letterman, Number Blast, etc.). All game pack disks are priced at \$3.00 (\$15 retail) or may be purchased with the SOFT PHONE INDEX program on the back for only \$5.00 (\$25.00 retail). Only a few Telelink packages are left for \$18.00 and only three BANDITS games are left for \$15.00 (\$34.95 retail). Finally, due to luck and a ridiculous rebate scheme, you can buy VISICALC for only \$65 (\$199 retail).

Of course, CARIDISK PLUS (\$25), SOFTBASE (\$12), ULTRACOPY (\$20), and DISKEDIT (\$25) are always available. CARIDISK owners, please note that installation is now available for the switches through SU.

HARDWARE:

First, WICO BOSS joysticks are \$12.00 (\$20 retail) and the PROSTICK is \$18.00 (\$29.95 retail) while the supply lasts. 800XLs only \$295, 1027 printers only \$290, ATR8000 w/CPM only \$415, WYSE 50 Terminals only \$575, BMC amber monitors only \$110, and finally, new 800 parts-\$cheap.



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Utilizing the luxurious recreational facilities of Green Lake Bible Camp in beautiful Spicer, Mn. Canoeing, swimming, hiking, volleyball, basketball and softball are just a few of the outdoor activities to go along with a great variety of computer opportunities.



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Applications
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INSTRUCTOR:

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BOTH MEMBERS OF TAIG

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SOME THOUGHTS ON PROGRAM SECURITY
By Mike Doleman

Let's say you have written a program (in BASIC, of course!) and for some reason you don't want just anyone running it. It's easy to put in a password that must be answered properly for the program to go on, but the password must be kept secret. Naturally you have made the program a run only program by disabling the break key (POKE 16,112:POKE 53774,112 after any GRAPHICS statement), forced a cold start on SYSTEM RESET (POKE 580,1) and disabled LIST (POKE PEEK(138) + PEEK(139) * 256 + 2,0: SAVE "D:FILENAME").

Problem is that the password is useless once someone guesses it or peeks over your shoulder when you run the program. Instead of, or at least in addition to, a password how about a key in the form of a joystick plug? The possibilities of making such a plug unique in the sense of a combination of numbers are respectable. Consider the two pot pins, each of which can be 0-228, and the stick pins and trigger pin can give a third range of 0-31.

To make the numbers, the pins on the joystick plug must be shorted to ground (in the case of the stick and trigger pins), or connected to ground through a resistor (for the pot pins). The value of the resistor will determine the pot value.

Once the plug has been prepared, its pot values should be determined by plugging it into a jack and reading it (or by testing the resistors before they are put in the plug). Using the values write a subroutine to check the stick, pot, or trigger values to see if they match the determined values. Obviously if the plug is not plugged in, they won't. And if they don't you can proceed with some mischief to foil the unauthorized attempt to run your program.

How "secure" is such a key? If the

program it is used with is a run only program, which cannot be LOADED and LISTed, the only way for the program to be run is if the person trying to run it knows enough about how to get the program fixed out there on the disk so it can be loaded and listed. How many people can do that?

MUSIC NOTES
By Ellen Moore

AMS Vol. II will be ready for sale in the TAIG library at the March meeting. The disk is complete on both sides and sells for \$6.00. The songs include:

BEATIT. AMS
DOGGIE. AMS
ELEPHANT.AMS
HELLOMYB.AMS
OLYMPICS.AMS
PUFFMAGI.AMS
SONATINA.AMS
ESPRESSI.AMS
ROOTBEER.AMS
TAKEFIVE.AMS
UPUPAWAY.AMS
WILDFIRE.AMS
BEE. AMS
ELEANOR. AMS
ELITE. AMS
FANTIMP. AMS
HARVEST. AMS
MASTRPCE.AMS
NUNKOMM. AMS
NUTCRACK.AMS
STARWARS.AMS
STONE. AMS
TEACH. AMS
WTC15. AMS

These are playable with Todd Burkey's AMS autorun, or the original Advanced Music System. If you bought AMS Vers. II, they are playable, but might need some editing wherever notes are tied together.

I'm getting together another disk of music, and more songs are needed to fill it on both sides. Thanks to Jim Gilsh of TAIG for his contribution of "Take Five", "Raggy

Waltz", and "Root Beer Rag". They are really excellent and add a bit of jazz to our library.

MINUTES FOR FEBRUARY 26, 1984
TAIG MEETING

Before the meeting got started tonight, Gordy Landsman, from Wizard Works, brought up a birthday cake for our illustrious Prez, Phil Selfert whose birthday was today, and everybody sang "Happy Birthday" to Phil.

Phil opened the meeting by announcing that we would be trying a new format for the meeting tonight with an intermission. He then introduced the club officers, and announced that later on tonight "The DRAWING" would be held, drawing names from the people that filled out the questionnaires. The prizes for the drawing will be: Bowler's D/B from APX, Math Football, Reversal, Starbase Hyperion, two disk boxes, and the Grand Prize: a nice wooden joystick base/holder.

Special Delivery from Steve Pauley of Computer Food--the new designs for the club logo are finally done, and there will be a vote on which one we will start using later on this evening.

Wayne Vasel, the Disk librarian, apologized for not having the listing for this month's DOM in the newsletter. The entire library list will be in next month's newsletter.

Dick Johnson announced that the Analog Compendium disks are now available in the following formats and prices: 2 double sided BASIC program disks - \$9, 4 single sided BASIC disks - \$13, 1 double sided machine language listing disk \$4. Contact Dick if you are interested in ordering them.

Membership report from Ellen Moore -- Club membership now stands at 344 members, with 40 members up for

renewal this month.

Lance Welch, the Book Librarian, announced new additions to the club library, which are: newsletters from other clubs, the Analog Compendium, Antic and Analog magazines, the Best of Antic (Anthology), Compute's Third Book of ATARI, and Compute's BASIC Source book.

Under Items of Interest - There is a new printer interface out, from Digital Devices, called Ape-Face (model 48p for 400/800's and XLP for XL series), price is about \$90, which is considerably less than the hard to find ATARI 850. Also in the area of printer interfaces, in Analog # 15, there is an article that shows you how to build your own "Cheap interface". If anyone builds one, please let us know and we will publish your results in the newsletter.

Open Discussion - Dick Johnson asked if anyone was interested in the disk version of the Antic Anthology. He decided to wait until the book had been out for a while longer before ordering it. Bill Summers told us that the club has renewed its Analog disk version subscription even though it no longer gets a break in price (Analog DOM's will be \$5 from now on). Read the article in last month's newsletter if you're interested in subscribing to Analog and would like a slight discount (if you're a club member). Dale Panton talked about some of the preliminary results of the questionnaire and thanked those club members that responded. He is still compiling the final results. Anyone who is interested in the ATR-CP/M user group - talk to Todd Burkey.

BBS News--The BBS is still down because the disk drives are being repaired, also we need a volunteer for Sysop. The BBS needs your help and support or it may go byebye.

Club meetings will be here at the

St. Louis Park Rec. Center for March and April, but we have to find some place else for the May meeting because the Rec. Center will be closed down for the entire month. If anyone has a suggestion for an alternate meeting place, please contact Phil the "Ruthless"

By the way, congratulations are in order for the winners of the "Drawing". Your secretary wasn't fast enough to match up who won what, but the winners were - Norman Kubokawa, Mike Yahna, Ben Meyer, John Novak, Rick LaMothe, Ken Huiras, Norbert Timm, and Mark Neuman.

Until next month, this is RC-The Balladeer, signing off.

WHERE THE ACTION IS!

By Mike Davis

Have you wanted more speed in your BASIC program execution? Do you get tired of using line numbers? Well, ACTION!, a new programming language, could be just for you. I'll be giving demonstrations of ACTION! at our March meeting during the subgroup time slot, 6 p.m. to 7 p.m.

If eight or more are interested in purchasing ACTION!, a group order can be made for only \$62 each, plus sales tax. The suggested retail price of ACTION! is \$99.95.

During the demonstration, I'll be answering questions about the usage of ACTION! and the similarities it has with ATARI BASIC. One point I would like to mention concerns running ACTION! programs. The ACTION! cartridge is needed to run compiled ACTION! source code, but O.S.S. has a non-commercial run-time disk available for only \$30. By using this disk, you will be able to compile ACTION! source code to a binary load file which would allow anyone to run a program that was written with ACTION!.

I would like to schedule tutorial sessions for ACTION! if there is enough interest. This language is very similar to Pascal. By the way, you DO NOT need to know ATARI BASIC to be able to use ACTION!.

If anyone would like to purchase ACTION! in a group order, please be sure to contact me at the March meeting so I can get your name on the list.

A REVIEW OF BASIC XL

By Steve Pauley

Reprinted from December '83 SPACE newsletter.

BASIC XL has now been released. The following article is a description of it and review of some of its features.

In the ads we have all seen they claim BASIC XL has twice the speed and power of ATARI BASIC. Now that I have had a chance to take it for a test drive, I can report that this is true and more. In fact, I have found that some things run five times as fast. Speed is not the only thing this language has.

Unlike a lot of members of our club I don't have years of programming background. ATARI BASIC is the only language that I have ever programmed in and only for two years. I have typed in renumbering programs, program listers, variable lister utilities, player/missile utilities, I/O utilities, joystick routines and more from magazine articles. I have written more menu programs than I care to count. I have bought programming utilities on disk and was tempted to buy even more, all in the search for easier and faster BASIC programming. BASIC XL has all of the above features and more. No more listing programs out to disk to use some special programming aid. It's all built right into the cartridge.

BASIC XL has all Statements and

Functions that ATARI BASIC does plus 46 new ones of its own. The following is a list of these new Statements and Functions:

STATEMENTS

* BGET

Gets any number of bytes from the device or file specified and stores them at any address.

* BPUT

Outputs a block of data to the device or file specified.

* CP

Same as DOS.

* DEL

Deletes programmer specified line currently in memory.

* DIM

2 dimensional strings are possible (string matrix). NOTE: Simple strings are auto DIMension.

* DIR

Lists contents of a disk directory to screen.

* DPOKE

Pokes two bytes of data into memory instead of one.

* ERASE

Will erase any unprotected files which match the given filespec.

* IF...ELSE...ENDIF

An exceptionally powerful conditional capability.

*LET

*LOMEM

This command is used to reserve space below the normal program space.

* LVAR

This command will list all variables currently in use and line number.

* MISSILE

An easy way for a player to "shoot" a missile.

* MOVE

A general purpose byte move utility which will move any number of bytes from any address to any address at assemble language speed.

* NUM

Automatic line numbering facility.

* PMCLR

Clears a player of missile area to all zero bytes.

* PMCOLOR

Set color of player/missiles.

* PMGRAPHICS

Enable player/missile graphics system.

* PMMOVE

Used to position the player/missile shape anywhere on the screen almost instantly.

* PMWIDTH

Allows each player/missiles width to be specified separately.

* PRINT USING

Allows user to specify a format for the output to the device (printer) or file.

* PROTECT

You can protect files on disk.

* RENAME

You can rename files on disk.

* RENUM

Renumbers entire program in memory.

* RGET

Used to retrieve fixed length records from the device or file and assign the values to string or numeric variables.

* RPUT

Output fixed length records to device or file.

* SET

Allows you to exercise control over a variety of BASIC XL system level functions.

* TAB

Outputs spaces to the device or file.

* TRACE...TRACEOFF

These statements are used to enable or disable the line number trace facility of BASIC XL.

* UNPROTECT

Allows you to unprotect write protected files on disk.

* WHILE...ENDWHILE

So long as the variable of WHILE remains non-zero, all statements between WHILE and ENDWHILE are executed.

FUNCTIONS

* BUMP

Accesses the collision registers of the ATARI and returns a 1 (collision) or 0 (no collision).

* DPEEK

Allows you to look at two consecutive bytes of information.

* ERR(0)

Returns the last run-time error

number.

*ERR(1)

Returns the line number where the error occurred.

* FIND

Finds substring in any given master string.

* HSTICK

Returns +1,0 or -1 for joystick horizontal position.

* PEN

Reads the ATARI light pen registers and returns their contents to the user.

* PMADR

Used to obtain the memory address of any player or missile.

* SYS

Used to find out the status of a given BASIC XL system function.

* TAB

For use in Print Using statement.

* VSTICK

Returns +1, 0 or -1 for vertical joystick position.

Here is a sample of the nice listings that you get with BASIC XL.

```
10 Rem "BASICXL.TST"
20 Graphics 7+16:Color 2
30 For X=0 To 159
40 For y=0 To 95
50 Plot X,Y
60 Next Y
70 Next X
80 Sound 0,200,10,10
90 For W=1 To 100:Next W
```

The program above takes 1 minute and 26 seconds to run in ATARI BASIC. The same program takes only 43 seconds to run in BASIC XL.

With all the new features in BASIC XL it may take me a little while to make use of all of them and I may not ever go back to ATARI BASIC.

RANDOM RETURN

This is the start of a new column that will help answer some of the questions that come up during the

meetings. If you remember at the last meeting PRESIDENT Phil handed out some sheets of paper entitled "Random Access Notes". Some of the questions were answered during the meeting and this column will serve to answer some of the more complicated questions. There are two of us who will attempt to answer the questions or find out the correct answers from other sources. We are Mark Neuman and Bernard King-Smith. The following are some of the questions asked on the random access notes last meeting.

1) When will the BBS be back up? Currently the BBS is waiting for the Percom drive to be returned from repairs. As soon as it is returned the BBS should be back on line. There is also a need for some help with the software for the BBS. We need some people to help maintain the program and some of the disks to keep the system up. The amount of work is not great and the programming skills required not too advanced. The program is written in BASIC so if you can help with the BBS contact Phil at the meeting.

2) Which is better: BASIC XL or MBASIC? Good question. It is a hard thing to say specifically if one version of BASIC is better than another. The BASIC that comes in the ATARI cartridges is definitely very low in comparison to either BASIC XL or MBASIC. A lot depends on what you want to do using BASIC and what features are available on a particular version. Some versions run faster than others and so would be better in applications that require greater speed. Some have features that help in writing programs with features like automatic line numbering and renumbering. Some take up more room in RAM, leaving less space for the actual program (such as a cartridge which uses very little room or a RAM loaded version that takes up 16K). Also cost might be a factor. How much can you spend on the program? The bottom line is to see what your needs are and find the version that best serves those needs. (Got out

of that one easy!!)

3) How do I get programs out of the program library? There are two ways to get copies of the library's programs. First, if you know what programs you want you can give a list of them to Wayne Vassel at the meetings along with a disk or tape and the finished disk or tape can be picked up at the next meeting. If you want the programs sooner you can also provide a self addressed envelope and \$1.00 and the programs will be mailed to you when they are transferred. If you don't have an extra disk or tape (which is rare these days) you can either pick up blank media from the dealers at the meeting or purchase a disk containing all the programs that were offered on the disks of the month which contains your programs. The cost for the old disks of the month is \$4.00 each. Copies of all the past disks of the month are available at the meetings from the librarian. Well that is all for this month. If you have any questions that you want answered in the newsletter be sure to fill out a random access note at the meeting. Next month a series of three articles dealing with how to get more than four colors on the screen using BASIC will begin. If the question you have seems simple ask anyway. There are many new novice ATARI users out there who don't have the experience that the rest of us have and these random access notes are a good way to help out those most in need. See ya next month.

ATARI TOUCH TABLET REVIEW by Steve Pauley

When I first went out to buy a computer a few years ago, I almost bought an Apple because of its graphics tablet. I decided to buy an ATARI solely because of its superior graphics capability. Now I have the best graphics computer

under \$5,000 and a graphics tablet too.

Now the KoalaPad is a real nice graphics tablet and I have no real complaints but I think ATARI's tablet is even better in a few ways: One improvement that ATARI made is that it is easier to get the cursor to hold still on the screen when you are trying to do very accurate placement of colors. This is only a guess, but I believe this is possible because the drawing surface of the ATARI tablet is made of a thinner plastic which is more flexible and sensitive to stylus pressure. Another nice feature of the ATARI tablet is the trigger button located on the stylus. If you have ever used a graphics tablet for six to eight hours at a time like I have you will really appreciate this feature. No more cramped wrists -- Thank you ATARI. I do wish, however, that the stylus cord was a about a foot longer. You also have two buttons on the tablet, which I do use under some drawing conditions.

The size and shape of the drawing tablet is the best improvement of all. If you have ever tried to trace a picture on the KoalaPad you know what I am talking about. ATARI made their tablet bigger and that makes tracing or free-hand drawing easier. The live area of the ATARI tablet is 5.85" X 4.5" and the KoalaPad is 3.8" X 3.55". The ATARI tablet is 95% larger or almost twice the size of the KoalaPad. The best improvement of all was that ATARI figured out that TV screens are not square, so why not make a graphics tablet that was the same proportions as the screen that you see your picture on.

Here are some numbers to illustrate what I mean. When I draw a 1 inch vertical line on the KoalaPad, it measures 1.5 inches on my screen and when I draw a 1 inch horizontal line it measures 2.17 inches on my screen. The result of this is that

every thing distortes badly when I try to trace something and it makes free-hand drawing a little tricky. When I draw a 1 inch vertical line on the ATARI tablet it measures 1.25 inches on the screen and when I draw a horizontal 1 inch line on the tablet it measures 1.4 inches on the screen. While this is not perfect, it is better than the KoalaPad and some of the remaining distortion may be due to the TV screen.

The ATARI Touch Tablet comes with Cartridge software called 'Atariartist', which is identical to Koala's 'Microillustrator', except for three added features to the mirror function. This software is better than any drawing program for ATARI written to use a graphics tablet or Joystick.

Suggested retail price for the ATARI Touch Tablet is \$89.95 and this is \$10 less than the KoalaPad. Not everyone is as crazy about drawing with a computer as I am but how can you be without a graphics tablet?

POLESITTER RETURNS

Last time I left you our dutiful data entry volunteer (also known as victim around BIR) had encountered the ever present hazard of entering incorrect data. There is a good and effective technique to check the data as it is entered into a program. The simplest method is to check the range of the data by using something like $IF \frac{1}{2}IX < 10$ THEN I have this system does not work very well.

There are 111 different car numbers possible to be used with a maximum of 42 cars on the track at once. The trick is to check each car number as it is entered to see if it is valid for that race. If you remember back to the last article there are two arrays of counters that record data for each eligible car number and for each lap. As

the program initializes itself it sets the counters for each car number to a preset value that would not represent valid data. In this case all car number counters are set to a negative value. It is not possible for a car to complete a negative number of laps. Once the program starts the operator is asked to enter the car numbers valid for the upcoming race. As each car number is entered the counter for that car is set to zero or the start lap. As the program runs it checks each car's counter and if it is negative it knows that an incorrect car number has been entered. The one downfall of this system is that if you enter someone else's car number it won't know the difference.

This type of check system can be used in other applications. For example, if you have a game like checkers you can use values to see if a game piece occupies a certain square. If you have a crossword puzzle you can check if a square is white or black.

Dave Erickson is now past the start /finish line no wiser to the fact that someone thought he was number 67. A message comes up on the screen "CAR NUMBER NOT ON GRID.". Well the LOUDSPEAKER announces that ice cream is being sold by Dairy Queen in the infield concession stand and the operator did not see the message!!!

What can you do to get around getting someone's attention when they are more interested in P.L. Neuman who happened to walk into Timing and Scoring? (Well ladies, being of the male gender I don't seem to have that trouble even when I go over his qualifying times from the official records!!!!!!!)

You will find that a lot of programs use a buzzer or tone to attract attention if something is wrong. Even when Mark Neuman's brother Chuck (see random access article) comes screeching out of

turn 10 in his Datsun 200SX SSC racer in a four wheel slide on street tires the ATARI speaker doesn't even come close to competing. When a data entry error occurs the program uses color changes to attract the attention of the operator (and anyone else who is hooked up to the track video circuit). Normally the screen is a dark grey for good contrast with the text. However when incorrect data is entered the screen turns a bright orange. This way if anyone is close to the screen they can't miss the screen color change. The program also attracts the trackside announcer's attention to any additional information to be broadcast by using color changes and other features. Well, I will leave that for next time. As we leave the scene of the beautiful northwoods our data entry expert wants to tell the announcer that the average speed of the race leader Willy T. Ribbs is 113.823 MPH. How will she transmit it without messing up the program? (Boy it is fun to confuse the help. It is hard to get good help especially when the salary range is volunteer!!!!)

```
#####
#####
###
### Remember the deadline ###
### for newsletter ###
### submissions is the ###
### fifth of the month. ###
###
### Any articles received ###
### after the fifth will be ###
### held until the following ###
### month's newsletter. ###
###
#####
#####
```

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If you need a good lightpen for your own programming needs, this will do the job. Switch activated with coiled cord.

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Dot matrix with graphics and two year warranty.

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GHOST HUNTER -D/C-	9.97	DEMON ATTACK	-R-	9.97
WIZARDS OF WOR -R-	9.97	WINGMAN	-D-	19.97
FLOYD OF JUNGLE D-	15.97	CHOPLIFTER	-D-	19.97
REAR GUARD	-D-	SUNCOM STAR JOYSTICK		5.97
STELLAR SHUTTLE D-	12.97	TAC*2 JOYSTICK		7.97
WAYOUT	-D-	SLIK STICK		4.97
REPTON	-D-	GAME SWITCH		1.97
BANDITS	-D-	LEFTY JOYSTICK ADAP.		1.97
PATHFINDER	-D-	6 FT. JOYSTICK CABLE		2.97
BETA LYRAE	-D-	16K ATARI MEM. BOARD		9.97

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Here are a few samples
from that list

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DONKEY KONG JR.-R-		39.97	MAC/65	-D-	55.97
ATARI LOGO	-R-	76.97	WINGMAN	-D-	25.97
BOULDER DASH	-D-	22.97	DRELBS	-D-	25.97
HOME ACCOUNTANT-D-		52.97	NECROMANCER	-D-	25.97
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computer
FOOD

See you at the next meeting
or call 560-2917 to order

CP/M On The ATARI
By Todd Burkey

Well, we did get the CP/M and SIGM User Group public domain libraries in and copied. It took about 20 man hours of time to copy the 8 inch set onto our own 8 inch disks (220 disks of about 230K disk space used per disk). Luckily, we were supplied with a track copier by the public domain distribution center or we could have easily taken 36 hours. Unluckily, a track copier doesn't work when trying to go from 8 inch to 5 1/4 inch diskettes, so after around 30 hours of copying, I have only 10 hours left to go. The 5 1/4 inch disks are in KAYPRO format, so that both ATR owner and ON-LINE will benefit from the library. I was hauling my entire system down to ON-LINE for several days worth of copying, so I got help when they weren't busy, but the experience has left me with a desire to never back up another disk and a temporary revulsion at the thought of eating another peanut. The 8 inch library will be available for check out by members of the ATR group after I finish the 5 1/4 backup process. The 5 1/4 inch disks volumes number 1 to 92 are available now at On-Line for ATR member copying. This set is the entire CPMUG software with the exception of some volumes that had duplicates in the SIGM library. Please be sure to see me for a card before you try to copy the disks at ON-LINE.

I got in my CP/M 86 for the 8088 co-processor and must say that I am very impressed with the fact that SWP was able to supply the standard software as delivered from Digital with only a simple modification to the COPYDISK program. In fact, the manual you get is the same one Digital supplies to IBM PC owners. CP/M 86 has an advantage over the other OS commonly used on 8088's (MSDOS) in that it uses the same disk file structure as CP/M 80 does on the ATR or other computers that contain two processors. This makes it a simple matter to toggle back and forth between the two processors and even transfer files

from one system to the other. There is no need to change disks or even to reboot the system. If you are in CP/M 80, you just type Z88 to switch to CP/M 86 and type Z80 to switch back. Another thing that came in with the CP/M 86 order was a new version of the RAMDISK software from SWP. This software allows you to use the 8088's 256K memory as a 252K ram disk drive (formatted the same as an 8 inch SSSD) from CP/M 80. The ramdisk can be assigned any disk number on the system (A-P) and if assigned as the first drive (A), it will shift all the other drives up by one and copy all of the track information into the ram drive. This allows you to run essentially any program that is available on CP/M 80 on the RAM drive without modification and at tremendous speed increases (since disk I/O is gone).

EDITOR NOTES

Due to space restrictions last month I didn't have room to introduce myself. I'm Ralph Jenson, some of you may remember me from the SPACE newsletter which I edited for about a year.

Now some technical information mainly for your TAIG trivia. The newsletter is being printed on my ATR 8000 (I know-- an ATARI newsletter being done with a CP/M machine) using a Royal letter quality printer/typewriter. I would appreciate any comments on the new format. I chose the three column format over two columns because you can 'pack' more information on the page. It also looks more professional (at least I think so). I've heard only one complaint about the print size. If there are any more please speak up. I could go to 12 cpi instead of 15 but I will continue with 15 cpi unless notified.

For those of you who've seen the SPACE newsletter (the recent ones edited by Steve Pauley) and have noticed their format of stapled in the middle 11"x17" paper, what do you think of it? Should TAIG consider this format? Let me know

at the meeting and I'll bring it up to the officers.

The next point I would like to bring up is the problem of the newsletter being too big to mail for twenty cents. Should we increase the membership fee to handle the extra cost of mailing or should we have two membership categories:

- 1) Pay an extra fee to have the newsletter mailed to you.
or
- 2) Pick your newsletter up at the meeting.

I think this point is an important one because the last newsletter was over the limit of the post office (for some people?) causing them to be returned. The current limit is 6 pages (12 sides) our past several newsletters have been over this limit. We could keep the newsletter under six pages but you, the members, wouldn't be getting all the articles that come in every month. Anyone with suggestions please contact Phil Seifert or myself (Ralph Jenson).

Enough of my ramblings and now on with the newsletter...

CARTDISK UPDATE
By TRB

Please note that in the article in last month's newsletter that I failed to mention what the orientation of the board had to be while you were soldering to it. To make sure you are doing it right, be sure that the left cartridge slot is on your left hand side when you are comparing the diagram to the actual underside of your mother-board.

For those of you that who don't feel up to cutting holes in your computers and soldering on some wires, I have arranged for someone to handle the full installation of the necessary switches for CARTDISK for only \$25.00, parts included.

For an additional \$10.00 this person will also install a 6502 reset switch while he has your system all taken apart. This will allow you to reset the computer when it freezes without losing memory.

Contact me (Todd Burkey) at 542-1027 for information on where to deliver and pick up your computer.

COMPUSERVE NOTES

By R.D. Jenson

For those of you that don't know what CompuServe is, here is a very brief overview of what applies to you, the ATARI user. There is a very active ATARI Special Interest Group (SIG) on CompuServe (Go PCS-132 for those of you who are members) where almost everything about the ATARI is or has been discussed. One of the best fetures I find is the level of expertise available on this SIG. For the ACTION! programmers Clinton Parker, author of ACTION!, is on the SIG and answers many questions and offers many free-for-the-down-loading ACTION! programs. There are also LOGO experts along with tele-(modem)conferences about various subjects. For those with a modem and an interest in professional telecommunications. "How do I connect up to CompuServe?" you might ask. The answer is very easy \$ (isn't it always). Actually the cost isn't that bad: If you can find someone selling a new TELELINK cartridge with an un-opened CompuServe membership, you're in. Or the newest version of the manuals and a membership are available at most B. Daltons and Waldonbooks bookstores. The hourly rate is now \$6.00 for 300 baud and \$12.50 for 1200 baud. In addition to the ATARI SIG there are many other SIG's and features that you can use. EMAIL, CompuServe's electronic mail facility can be used as a quick way to send mail to other members of CompuServe. If you're interested and need more information contact me at the meeting.

HARDWARE/SOFTWARE

By Todd Burkey

Not much to talk about this month. Atari's version of the Koala Pad is out at last...at least in Target, not all of the dealers have them yet. I heard it is at least as good as the Koala Pad and that it does have some features that some people may like that the Koala doesn't have. I played around with one at Target for a bit the other day (the employees really don't like to help you hook up something to try out!) and can't really say that I saw much difference between the two pads. The feel was a bit softer on the ATARI tablet, but the Koala is a bit more comfortable if you just want to lay back on a sofa and doodle. I think I will leave a review of the finer points of the two tablets to S. Pauley, since his review is scheduled for this or the next newsletter.

In software, the only game of interest that I was impressed with was Dimension X. This is a good high resolution graphics (with excellent 3-D scrolling), nice sound effects, search and destroy type of game. With a concept much the same as Star Raiders (protect the capital at all costs, but don't forget to stop for fuel and repairs), this game provides what I would consider a moderate challenge for the average game player. Figure on taking about 20 hours of play to master the game.

One important note. This program will not work on disks with the Archiver in them. I hear Spartan Software is working on a fix. One more important note. DO NOT run this program on any disk drive capable of writing to unnotched diskettes. The first thing the program does is try to format itself....guess what kind of disk drive mine is. (guess who ended up formatting the first copy while waiting to pick up an article -ed)

DUE TO EDITORIAL & PUBLISHING SET-BACKS THE LIBRARY WAS NOT ABLE TO LIST CURRENT DISK OF THE MONTH PROGRAMS. THE PAST & CURRENT LISTINGS ARE:

OCTOBER

DRAW	- NEAT PROGRAM
MULTIPLY	- EXC. MATH PROGRAM
DESIGN	- INTERESTING
INVASION	- SHOOT-EM-UP
DICEROLL	- DICE GAME
CUBE	- ETCH-A-CUBE
BLASTER	- BLAST-EM-UP
STARWARP	- STARTREK
EAR	- EXC. SCIENCE QUIZ
CRAPS	- ROLL THE DICE
TREASURE	- WHERE IS CAPT. HOOK?
PLOTAL	- POLAR FUNCTIONS
STORIES	- WRITE YOUR OWN

NOVEMBER

ROTATE	- MIND PUZZLER
PMGRAPH	- PM UTILITY
STORIES	- SORRY, OCT. REPEAT
SAUCER	- SKEET SHOOT?
LANDING	- SIMULATOR
SUB	- DIVE, DIVE
TARGET	- ARCADE SHOOT
TARGET2	- ARCADE SHOOT AGAIN
PREMATH	- MATH TUTOR
CONCTION	- CONCENTRATION
LOGO	- ATARI, WHO ELSE

DECEMBER

NEW	- SURPRISE
SUN1	- SUNRISE
SUN2	- SUNRISE AGAIN
INDEX40K.BAS	- FILE MGR. SYSTEM
INDEX24K.BAS	- FILE MGR. SYSTEM
TRIVIA	- QUIZ TIME
INKBLOT	- NEAT
KINETIC	- ENERGY ?
BOMB	- REALLY????
BALISTIC	- NOT MISSILES
OUTPOST	- SURVIVAL RUN
SYSTAT2	- SYSTEM STATUS

JANUARY

MUSICFLG	- EXCELLENT
GRPHMODE	- GR. REVIEW
PRETTY.MAX	- NICE DISPLAY
ANIMATE.BAR	- 3 DIM. DISPLAY

CRYPTOGR.AM - SECRET CODES
 RACE - HORSE RACE
 LOST - MAZE CRAZE
 TUNEIN - SIMON AGAIN
 ENGINEER - BUILD BRIDGE

FEBRUARY

BUSINESS - UTILITY
 TUNERITE - WRITE MUSIC
 DODGE - RACE GAME
 DRAGONS - BEWARE
 GAMEPAK1 - TRY THESE OUT
 CHECKERS - GOOD GRAPHICS
 SLINKY - SHORT & NEAT

MARCH

SIGN - CREATE YOUR OWN
 MOVEABOX - GRAPHICS ANIMATION
 OXYGENE - DIFFERENT
 BOW - FOR GIFT WRAPPING
 BACKWARD - NICE DISPLAY
 BOXDEMO - SUPER DISPLAY
 BARGRPH - CHART AWAY
 DIATONIC - DISPLAY AWAY
 MESSAGE - WATW(?? -ed)
 STRINGAR - COMMAN ART
 ALTUSE9 - SCREEN READER
 HOTSTUFF - DISK DIR. UTILITY
 PEEKER - LOOK INSIDE ATARI
 EXAMINE - SECTOR SEARCHER
 PLOT825 - PRINTER UTILITY
 QUESTION - WRITE YOUR OWN
 TIMECLOK - KEEP TIME
 MATH2 - FUNCTIONS
 MATHDRIL - MATH PROGRAM
 MELODICE - MUSICAL DICE
 SPACE16 - FUTURE ART
 MATHPKG - YES, MATH AGAIN
 POWER2 - HELP NOT AGAIN
 RAYSLSR - FLASH

SEE YOU AT THE MEETING.

REAL PROGRAMMERS DON'T EAT QUICHE

Reprinted from the Winnipeg
 ACE newsletter, November 1983

Real Programmers don't eat quiche. They like Twinkies, Coke, and palate-scorching Szechwan food.

Real Programmers don't write application programs. They program right down to the base metal. Application programming is for dullards who can't do systems programming.

Real Programmers don't write specs. Users should be grateful for whatever they get; they are lucky to get any programs at all.

Real Programmers don't comment their code. If it was hard to write, it should be even harder to understand and modify.

Real Programmers don't document. Documentation is for simpletons who can't read listings or the object code from the dump.

Real Programmers don't draw flowcharts. Flowcharts are, after all, the illiterate's form of documentation. Cavemen drew flowcharts; look how much good it did them.

Real Programmers don't read manuals. Reliance on a reference is the hallmark of a novice and the coward.

Real Programmers don't write in RPG. RPG is for gum-chewing dimwits who maintain ancient payroll programs.

Real Programmers don't write in COBOL. COBOL is for Common Business Oriented Laymen who can run neither a business or a real program.

Real Programmers don't write in FORTRAN. FORTRAN is for wimp engineers who wear white socks. They get excited over finite state analysis and nuclear reactor simulation.

Real Programmers don't write in PL/1. PL/1 is for insecure anal retentives who can't choose between COBOL and FORTRAN.

Real Programmers don't write in BASIC. Actually, no programmers write in BASIC after reaching puberty.

Real Programmers don't write in APL unless the whole program can be written in one line.

Real Programmers don't write in LISP. Only sissy programs contain more parentheses than actual code.

Real Programmers don't write in PASCAL, ADA, BLISS, or any of those other sissy computer science languages. Strong typing is a crutch for people with weak memories.

Real Programmers' programs never work right the first time. But if you throw them on the machine, they can be patched into working order in "only a few" debugging sessions.

Real Programmers don't play tennis, or any other sport which requires a change of clothes. Mountain climbing is OK, and Real Programmers wear climbing boots to work in case a mountain should suddenly spring up in the middle of the machine room.

Real Programmers never work 9 to 5. If any Real Programmers are around at 9 a.m., it is because they were up all night long.

Real Programmers disdain structured programming. Structured programming is for compulsive neurotics who were prematurely toilet-trained. They wear neckties and carefully line up pencils on an otherwise clear desk.

Real Programmers don't like the Team Programming concept. Unless, of course, they are the Chief Programmer.

Real Programmers never "write" memos on paper. They "send" memos via EMAIL.

Real Programmers have no use for managers. Managers are a necessary evil. They exist only to deal with personnel bozos, bean counters, senior planners, and other mental midgets.

Real Programmers scorn floating point arithmetic. The decimal point was invented for pansy bedwetters who are unable to think big.

Real Programmers don't believe in schedules. Planners make up schedules. Managers "firm up" schedules. Frightened coders strive to meet schedules. Real Programmers ignore schedules.

Real Programmers don't bring brown-bag lunches. If the vending machine sells it, they eat it. If the vending machine doesn't sell

It, they don't eat it. Vending machines don't sell quiche.

Review
SUSPENDED
Reprinted from ABACUS
November 1983

Add to the hall of fame list this newest text adventure by Michael Berlyn, author and programmer of "Cyborg" and "Oo-Topos" (\$49.95, Infocom, 32K, keyboard, disk).

As "Suspended" begins, the player has awakened from a cryogenic sleep in a subterranean laboratory and discovers that something has gone wrong with the life-support system on his distant planet. With six remote-controlled robots ready to take orders and return status reports, the player remains in the lab attempting to uncover the system breakdown and repair it before it wipes out the entire population.

Like all recent Infocom games, "Suspended" is lavishly packaged with an extensive instruction booklet and a map with markers that help keep track of the location of the six robots. The game uses the now-famous Infocom parser that allows sophisticated, full-sentence commands and tells the player exactly what's wrong when the computer can't understand the input.

Each of the robots has a special capability indicated by its name. Auda can hear. Waldo can manipulate items. Iris can see. Whiz can interact with the main computer system. Sensa can feel. And Poet, well, like all creative types, Poet's reactions to things are sometimes vague but frequently enlightening. Puzzling out his deceptive remarks and dealing with each robot's strength and weakness brings "Suspended" its unique style.

Berlyn's plot and puzzles are first-rate, tough but logical. The situation quickly creates its own reality and it doesn't take much

imagination for a player to believe he is locked in the bowels of an alien earth, piecing together the clues provided by his remote, mechanical colleagues.

What's more, even after the player has solved the puzzle, it is possible to replay "Suspended" to find a more efficient way to save the planet with fewer casualties.

"Suspended" isn't for all tastes. It's hardcore Sci-Fi (Berlyn's next adventure explores an ancient pyramid in a Dungeons and Dragons-like scenario). Still, the complexity of "Suspended", with its six different robots, represents the current state of the art, and is a must for all computer adventure and Sci-Fi fans.

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